

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 106514
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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SOE-02 AF-10 ARA-14
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TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
INFO USDEL MBFR VIENNA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY
USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 106514

USSALTTWO/CTB

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: APRIL 26 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL
INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX, SOFIA FOR AMBASSADOR

1. KEVIN KLOSE OF WASHINGTON POST REPORTED FROM MOSCOW
THAT BREZHNEV SAID "SOME PROGRESS" HAD BEEN MADE ON NEW
SALT TREATY DURING VANCE'S VISIT LAST WEEK. KLOSE SAID
"SOVIET LEADER'S CONCILIATORY TONE ON SALT WAS COUPLED
WITH REAFFIRMATION OF MOSCOW'S INTENTIONS TO CONTINUE ITS
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PAGE 02 STATE 106514

PRESENT POLICY IN AFRICA AND REITERATION OF HIS OFFER NOT
TO ENGAGE IN PRODUCTION OF NEUTRON WEAPONS 'AS LONG AS
U.S. DOES NOT DO SO.' WESTERN ANALYSTS WERE LESS ENTHU-
SIASTIC ABOUT THESE COMMENTS SINCE THEY DID NOT SUGGEST
NEW RESTRAINT ON PART OF MOSCOW.... BREZHNEV'S REMARKS
ON NEUTRON WEAPONS WERE PROMPTLY DESCRIBED BY PRESIDENT
CARTER IN WASHINGTON AS HAVING 'NO MEANING, NO SIGNIFICANCE

AT ALL.' CLEARLY U.S. HAD EXPECTED MORE SUBSTANTIAL MOVE BY SOVIETS WHEN CARTER DECIDED TO HOLD OFF PRODUCTION OF NEUTRON WEAPON TO GIVE MOSCOW AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE MEANINGFUL RESPONSE."

2. NEW YORK TIMES POINTED OUT THAT U.S. "FAVORS AN ACCORD LINKING RESTRICTIONS ON AMERICAN NEUTRON WEAPONS TO SOVIET REDUCTIONS IN TANK FORCES OR LONG-RANGE MISSILES. IN HIS ANSWER TODAY, MR. CARTER INDICATED THAT U.S. REMAINED INTERESTED IN NEGOTIATING OVER NEUTRON WEAPON, BUT THAT ANY TALKS WOULD ALSO HAVE TO FOCUS ON SOVIET MILITARY FORCES THAT APPEAR TO THREATEN NATO."

3. CRAIG WHITNEY OF NEW YORK TIMES SAID BREZHNEV, IN HIS SPEECH TO COMMUNIST YOUTH CONGRESS, DENIED ANY AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS AGAINST NATO MEMBERS. "UNLIKE NATO COUNTRIES," BREZHNEV SAID, "WE HAVE NOT BEEN ENLARGING OUR ARMED FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE FOR LONG TIME." WHITNEY SAID PENTAGON, HOWEVER, ESTIMATES THAT 150,000 MEN HAVE BEEN ADDED TO SOVIET FORCES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE IN LAST TEN YEARS, AND SOVIET TANK STRENGTH THERE IS THOUGHT TO HAVE REACHED 11,000.

4. RETIRED GEN. ARTHUR COLLINS, FORMER DEPUTY COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF U.S. ARMY IN EUROPE, SAID NEUTRON WEAPONS SYSTEM "WILL AT BEST ADD LITTLE TO NATO'S DEFENSE, AT UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 106514

WORST IT COULD LEAD TO DISASTER.... NATO USE OF NEUTRON WEAPONS DEVELOPED FOR LIMITED EMPLOYMENT, DISCRETE FIRE TECHNIQUES AND PINPOINT ACCURACY IN DEFENSE OF NATO IS GOING TO DRAW SOVIET RESPONSE WITH TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS; THERE SHOULD BE NO FUZZY THINKING ON THAT POINT. ASYMMETRY BETWEEN SOVIET NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND NEUTRON BOMB WOULD BE SO GREAT THAT LARGER AND LESS ACCURATE SOVIET WEAPONS WOULD BE DEVASTATING TO NATO FORCES USING SMALL WEAPONS." WRITING IN BALTIMORE SUN, COLLINS SAID "MOST LIKELY RESULT OF NATO FIRST USE OF NEUTRON BOMBS WOULD BE FOR NATO TO LOSE FASTER."

5. BALTIMORE SUN EDITORIALY SAID CARTER'S "CURT REJECTION" OF BREZHNEV'S CALL FOR MUTUAL BAN ON NEUTRON WEAPONS "WAS WHAT MOSCOW DESERVED." SUN SAID IF BREZHNEV IS TO RESPOND IN KIND TO CARTER DECISION TO DELAY PRODUCTION OF NEUTRON WEAPONS, "HE WILL HAVE TO SCALE DOWN WARSAW PACT'S MENACING ARRAY OF 20,500 TANKS AND REDUCE NUMBER OF SS-20 MOBILE INTERMEDIATE-RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILES NOW TARGETS ON WESTERN EUROPE."

6. CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, IN EDITORIAL, DECLARED

THAT VANCE "INCREASINGLY LOOKS LIKE RIGHT SECRETARY OF STATE AT RIGHT TIME.... WHEN SECRETARY RETURNS FROM MOSCOW SAYING THERE IS GOOD REASON FOR MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY ON HIS ARMS CONTROL TALKS THERE, HE INSPIRES BELIEF RATHER THAN DOUBT. HIS EXPLANATION MAKES SENSE: THAT PROGRESS COULD BE DETERRED BECAUSE SOVIETS WOULD REGARD U.S. AIRING OF INFORMATION AS PROPAGANDA MOVE. BUT WITHHOLDING POINTS OF SALT TWO AGREEMENT OR

DISAGREEMENT FROM PRESS AND PUBLIC MAKES IT ALL MORE ESSENTIAL THAT SECRETARY VANCE'S URGING AGAINST LEAKS BE HONORED. SALT DEBATE HAS BEEN DAMAGED AND DISTORTED IN PAST BY OPPONENTS' USE OF LEAKS TO UNDERCUT PROPONENTS BY GETTING OUT INFORMATION FIRST, AND SOMETIMES MISTAKEN UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 04 STATE 106514

INFORMATION, IN NEGATIVE CONTEXT."

7. BALTIMORE SUN REPORTED FROM NEW DELHI THAT PRIME MINISTER DESAI TOLD PARLIAMENT THAT, EVEN IF ENTIRE WORLD WERE AGAINST INDIA'S INDEPENDENT NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, HE WILL NOT SIGN SAFEGUARDS AS U.S. HAS ASKED. HE SAID DECISION OF U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION NOT TO SUPPLY ENRICHED URANIUM FOR AMERICAN-BUILT TARAPUR ATOMIC PLANT AMOUNTS TO "BREACH OF AGREEMENT."

8. AVIATION WEEK & SPACE TECHNOLOGY (APRIL 24) REPORTED THAT SERIES OF INFORMATION SEMINARS ON SALT IS BEING ARRANGED FOR CONGRESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS. THIRTY SENATE AIDES RECENTLY ATTENDED FIRST OF SERIES, SPONSORED BY CENTER OF INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC STUDIES AT BOSTON, VIRGINIA. STAFF MEMBER SAID SEMINAR'S "CONCERN FOCUSED NOT SO MUCH ON TREATY, BUT ASYMMETRIES OF TREATY." SEMINAR FEATURED PAUL NITZE, WILLIAM HYLAND, RICHARD PERLE AND PETER HUGHES, PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER OF HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE. "THIS SEMINAR IS NOTICE TO ADMINISTRATION THAT WE ARE ORGANIZED TO DEAL WITH MAJOR SALT ISSUES," ONE CONGRESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER SAID.

9. JAMES RESTON OF NEW YORK TIMES OBSERVED THAT VANCE RETURNED FROM MOSCOW TALKING ABOUT BETTER ATMOSPHERE AND SOME PROGRESS TOWARD SALT TREATY, "BUT HE IS NOT TELLING US WHAT WAS DISCUSSED OR WHY HE FEELS LITTLE MORE CONFIDENT.... BUT SENATE IS CLEARLY NOT SATISFIED WITH MR. VANCE'S VAGUE ASSURANCES THAT 'ATMOSPHERE' IS BETTER FOR REASONS HE THINKS IT PRUDENT NOT TO EXPLAIN. IT IS EVEN CHALLENGING DECISION TO SELL ADVANCED AIR- UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 106514

PLANES TO ISRAEL, EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA. IN SHORT, SENATE IS SKEPTICAL NOT ONLY OF SOVIETS BUT OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION THESE DAYS. IT WANTS SUBSTANCE AND NOT 'ATMOSPHERE' THIS TIME. IT WANTS WHAT IT WILL PROBABLY NEVER GET, NOT BRICK-BY-BRICK DIPLOMACY BUT SECURE WALL AGAINST ANY MORE SOVIET PENETRATION."

10. WASHINGTON POST REPORTED THAT HOUSE SPEAKER O'NEILL APPEALED TO PRESIDENT CARTER YESTERDAY TO DELAY INDEFINITELY PLANNED SALE OF JET WARPLANES TO ISRAEL, EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA OR FACE DEFEAT ON ISSUE IN CONGRESS.

BUT CARTER, SAYING "THESE PROPOSALS ARE IN NATIONAL INTEREST," REFUSED TO YIELD, POST ADDED. VANCE

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